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THE RECRUITMENT JUNCTION MAKING MORE EMPLOYMENT CONNECTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH CONVICTIONS THANKS TO NEWCASTLE BUILDING SOCIETY SUPPORT

A North East charity that helps people with convictions get back into work is aiming to extend its reach with the help of new funding from Newcastle Building Society.

The Recruitment Junction helps its clients rediscover a sense of purpose through work and become role models who drive positive generational impact across their families, while also helping employers address their skills shortages through access to a pool of resourceful, resilient workers.

Set up 18 months ago, the Newcastle-headquartered Charity has already helped more than 150 people across the North East area get into employment, while around 60 employers have signed up to be part of the project, including Adderstone Group, Amey, Suez, Greene King and Mitie.

The Recruitment Junction is now using a £3,000 Newcastle Building Society grant to organise four workshops, two of which will help candidates prepare for job applications, interviews and getting back into work.

The other workshops will be targeted at employers and are designed to help them understand how the charity operates and the benefits that they could gain for accessing a new talent pool of potential recruits.

The funding has been provided through the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation, which offers grants to charities and community groups located in or around the communities served by the Society's branch network.

The Recruitment Junction supports 'work ready' candidates who are in stable accommodation and have no drug or alcohol-related issues, and assists them with preparing disclosure statements for potential employers about their previous convictions, as well as CVs and application letters.

The organisation is active across most industries, with vacancies in the construction, warehousing, facilities management, hospitality and administration sectors being among the most common ones for candidates to fill.

Training can be provided to help candidates develop or improve workplace skills that might be required for a particular role, while a number of volunteer business mentors give their time for practice interviews.

Beverley Brooks, founder/director at The Recruitment Junction, says: “Our core belief is that people deserve a second chance, but a criminal conviction can often be perceived as a barrier to finding employment and can stop people making a fresh start.

“The candidates we work with recognise the value of the opportunities they’re getting, and our experience is that helping them find new jobs cuts down on reoffending rates, enables them to move away from the lifestyle choices that had previously caused problems and has a wider positive impact on their families’ lives.

“Our employers also feel the practical benefits of gaining access to a new talent pool and taking on committed, skilled staff who are very eager to show their worth.

“We’d love to see more North East companies getting involved with what is proving to be a very effective service that has a clear positive impact on the regional economy, as well as to see more candidates coming forward for help in getting back into work.

“The funding we’ve received from Newcastle Building Society is enabling us to put on these workshops much sooner than our resources would otherwise allow and we’re confident that they will have a positive impact on the outcomes that our candidates and employers enjoy.”

Donna Stubbs, community manager at Newcastle Building Society, adds: “The community impact of The Recruitment Junction team’s work is already clear to see

after just a short period of operation and these events will hopefully enable them to get more people find work with more regional employers.”

Since its launch in 2016, Newcastle Building Society’s Community Fund has contributed over £2.1m in grants and partnerships to a wide variety of charities and projects across the region, including the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and the Prince’s Trust.

The grants are so far estimated to have had a positive impact on more than 151,000 people.

The Newcastle Building Society Community Fund is run in association with the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland.

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About Newcastle Building Society

Newcastle Building Society* is the biggest building society in the North East, with a network of 30 branches and assets of more than £4.9bn. We’ve been here for our members for over 150 years.

As a leading local employer, we’re committed to growing our region’s talent and being a great place to work where people can realise their potential. We hold Platinum IIP and were voted Number 2, Best Places to Work in the North East in 2019.

We help people to own their home, to save and to plan their finances through our range of products and services. We believe in the role of the high street at the heart of our communities and are proactive in making financial information and financial advice accessible across our region.

Our Financial Advice is provided through our Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited division**.

We’re dedicated to helping our North East communities make positive changes; since 2016 the financial support through grants and donations from the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation to benefit local causes has surpassed £2.1m

www.newcastle.co.uk

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